

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1-3, 6, 7, and 10, as indicated below. The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended): An authentication method of an image processing system in which a host computer, an authentication apparatus, and an image processing apparatus are connected to a network, the method comprising:

a first request step of, at the host computer, issuing a request for authentication to the image processing apparatus when the host computer remotely operates the image processing apparatus;

~~a transmission reception step of, at the image processing apparatus host computer, transmitting receiving from the image processing apparatus data for specifying the authentication apparatus, which authenticates performs an authentication process on an operation level of [[the]] a remote operation, to the host computer, in a case where the host computer is authenticated in response to the request in the first request step;~~

~~a second request step of, at the host computer, issuing a request for the authentication process to the authentication apparatus based on the data transmitted in the transmission step; an authentication step of, at, wherein the authentication apparatus: process is to authenticate an operation level of the remote operation performed by the host computer, performing the authentication process in response to the request in the second request step; and~~

~~a remote operation step of, at the host computer, remotely operating the image~~

processing apparatus in accordance with the operation level authenticated in the authentication step: process.

Claim 2. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein the data transmitted received in the transmission reception step includes add-on software, and the host computer requests the authentication apparatus to effect execution of the authentication process by the add-on software.

Claim 3. (currently amended): The method according to claim 2, wherein the requested authentication step process is to be performed using codes transmitted in the second request step and a dictionary which that defines operation levels with respect to the image processing apparatus.

Claim 4. (previously presented): The method according to claim 3, wherein the dictionary is contained in the authentication apparatus on the network.

Claim 5. (previously presented): The method according to claim 4, wherein the data is an address of the authentication apparatus on the network.

Claim 6. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein the remote operation is at least one of: a download operation, a browsing operation, a printing operation, and a transfer operation.

Claim 7. (currently amended): An image processing system comprising:
a host computer, an authentication apparatus, and an image processing apparatus
connected to a network; network,

a first request unit configured to, at said wherein the host computer; computer is configured to issue a first request for authentication to said the image processing apparatus when said the host computer remotely operates said the image processing apparatus;

a transmission unit configured to, at said wherein the image processing apparatus; apparatus is configured to transmit data for specifying the authentication apparatus, which authenticates performs an authentication process on an operation level of [[the]] a remote operation, to said the host computer, in a case where said host computer is authenticated in response to the request by said first request unit;

a second request unit configured to, at said wherein the host computer; computer is configured to issue a second request for the authentication process to said the authentication apparatus based on the data transmitted by said transmission unit; the image processing apparatus;

an authentication unit configured to, at said wherein the authentication apparatus; apparatus is configured to authenticate an operation level of the remote operation performed by the host computer, perform the authentication process in response to the second request by said second request unit; and

a remote operation unit configured to, at wherein the host computer; computer is configured to remotely operate said the image processing apparatus in accordance with the operation level authenticated by said the authentication apparatus.

Claims 8. and 9. (cancelled).

Claim 10. (currently amended): A computer-readable recording medium recording a program for causing a computer to execute an authentication method of an image processing system in which a host computer and an image processing apparatus are connected to a network, the method comprising:

a first request step of, at the host computer, issuing a request for authentication to the image processing apparatus when the host computer remotely operates the image processing apparatus;

a transmission reception step of, at the image processing apparatus, host computer, transmitting receiving from the image processing apparatus data for specifying the authentication apparatus, which authenticates performs an authentication process on an operation level of [[the]] a remote operation, to the host computer, in a case where the host computer is authenticated in response to the request in the first request step;

a second request step of, at the host computer, issuing a request for the authentication process to the authentication apparatus based on the data transmitted in the transmission step; an authentication step of, at, wherein the authentication apparatus, process is to authenticate an operation level of the remote operation performed by the host computer, performing the authentication process in response to the request in the second request step; and

a remote operation step of, at the host computer, remotely operating the image processing apparatus in accordance with the operation level authenticated in the authentication step; process.